

February 8, 2011

Honorable James Sperling, Chair  
MTC Planning Committee  
Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter  
101 Eighth Street  
Oakland, CA 94607

Dear Chair Sperling and Members of the Committee:

The business and economic development organizations listed below are extremely concerned about the MTC's proposal for establishing the timeline and criteria for the Call for Projects process that will determine what projects are submitted to MTC (principally by CMAs and transit agencies) for inclusion in the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTC/SCS).

MTC staff is proposing that Call for Project Letters go out on February 10. However, the staff's proposed timeline and project evaluation criteria were only made public at the Regional Advisory Working Group meeting on February 1, and will be brought before a standing agency committee (MTC Planning) for the first time on February 9, just one day before the proposed date for sending the letters, leaving no real time for thoughtful public or agency input and deliberation. In particular, we believe the General Project Criteria need greater attention and discussion, including what impact these criteria will have on specific projects, including those included in previous Regional Transportation Plans. We respectfully request that you delay issuing the document to allow for greater discussion and participation by stakeholders and that this issue be brought back to the Planning Committee at its next meeting.

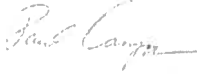
We have similar concerns relating to policies that are to be discussed in coming weeks, including (1) definition of "committed" projects and funding; (2) the proposed RTP revenue assumptions; (3) the project performance assessment policies; and (4) staff interpretation of the scope of MTC's authority to override the SB 375 exemption provisions for transportation projects approved by voters as part of local sales tax measures and the authority staff relies upon for that interpretation. Each of these proposed staff policies will have a direct and substantial effect on the core RTP/SCS outcome of what transportation projects and programs the Bay Area will fund over the next 30 years.

We understand the importance of the SCS and of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and we are committed to that process and to achieving the goals. However, we also know that the region's continued economic vitality and competitiveness will be crucial to the success of the SCS. Therefore, these policies must be developed thoughtfully, deliberatively and with a full understanding by decision makers and the public of the consequences for the transportation system, including how specific transportation projects will be affected by the proposed policies, as well as how they ultimately will impact the region's economic health and ability to create jobs.

Thank you for your consideration.



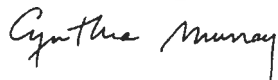
Michael Cunningham  
Vice President, Transportation  
Bay Area Council



Paul Campos  
Sr. Vice President, Governmental Affairs  
Bay Area Building Industry Association



Greg McConnell  
President & CEO  
Jobs and Housing Coalition



Cynthia Murray  
President & CEO  
North Bay Leadership Council



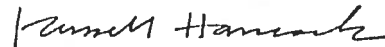
Mike Amman  
President  
Solano Economic Development Association



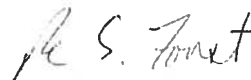
John Coleman  
Executive Director  
Bay Planning Coalition



Linda Best  
President & CEO  
Contra Costa Council



Russell Hancock  
President & Chief Executive Officer  
Joint Venture: Silicon Valley Network



Rosanne Foust  
President & CEO  
San Mateo County Development  
Association

Cc: Steve Heminger  
County Congestion Management Agencies